

MEETING MINUTES

Finance Committee
September 16, 2009

CALL TO ORDER

Time – 7:00 P.M.

Members in attendance: Chairman Joanne F. Marden, Mary O'Donoghue, S. Jon Stumpf, Cindy Milne, Richard T. Howe, Mark Merritt, Paul Fortier, Stephen Stapinski and Peggy Kruse.
Also Present: Finance Director Anthony Torrisi and Town Manager Reginald Stapczynski.

MEETING MINUTES

The following minutes were moved, seconded and unanimously approved 9-0:
July 13, 2009
August 17, 2009 Regular Meeting
August 17, 2009 Tri-Board (with changes)

COMMUNICATIONS

Mark Merritt volunteered to act as liaison to the Audit Committee.

Ms. Marden reminded Committee members of the ATFC Annual Meeting to be held on October 24th in Franklin, MA and instructed anyone who would be interested in attending to let Finance secretary Carolyn Lynch know. She added that Mr. Torrisi would be participating in this year's meeting as presenter of a workshop titled "New to the Finance Committee: Budgeting 101". Ms. Marden will serve as moderator to one of the sessions as well.

There was a brief discussion regarding the status of legislators' response to letters sent by Committee members last April. Mr. Howe offered to contact legislators in order to discuss issues most important to the Town. It was agreed by all to share in that responsibility.

BUDGET DEFICIT UPDATE

Mr. Stapczynski gave an update on current budget numbers along with the status of his recommendations for FY2010. He cited a reduction in State Aid as well as decreased local revenue numbers as two main causes for the deficit. Additionally, it was noted that New Growth numbers had come in higher than expected. Committee members reviewed a draft copy of the Town's operating budgets by department with reductions totaling \$496,000. Lengthy discussion ensued including the following cost saving options taken by departments in order to cut costs:

Public Safety – reduced Personal Services by \$202,000., reduction in Over Time; 3 firefighter vacancies, possibility of billing private insurance companies for services rendered at accident and fire scenes.

General Government – reduced Personal Services by \$25,000., reduced Other Expenses by \$60,000., position vacancy due to retirement in CD&P, cuts in office expenses, lower Medicare contributions and cuts in legal expenses.

Public Works – reduced Personal Services by \$21,500., reduced Other Expenses by \$61,500., reductions in workforce or by union concessions currently being discussed, reduced street lighting costs.

Plant & Facilities – reduced Personal Services by \$46,274., reduced Other Expenses by \$22,726.

Library – reduced Personal Services by \$41,000.

Community/Youth/Elder Services – reduced Personal Services by \$4,800., reduced Other Expenses by \$11,200.

Water - proposing \$1M reduction including FTE's, hours and union concessions as well as increased water rates.

The option of making further aggressive cuts to personnel was brought forth for discussion. Mr. Stapczynski noted that any action to further cut personnel should be equally shared.

Mr. Torrisi stated that there would most likely be a savings in Health Insurance costs and that a more accurate number would be available in two weeks.

Actions on the following warrant articles were taken:

Stephen Stapinski moved and Mary O'Donoghue seconded to recommend approval of Article 11 Transfer to Water Reserves. The motion passed unanimously 9-0.

Mark Merritt moved and Stephen Stapinski seconded to recommend approval of Article 4, Water Department Personal Services line item 19 for the amount of \$1,724,715. and Other Expenses line item 20 for the amount of \$2,176,400. totaling \$3,901,115. The motion passed unanimously 9-0.

Stephen Stapinski moved and Mark Merritt seconded to recommend approval of Article 4, Sewer Department Personal Services line item 17 for the amount of \$398,113. and Other Expenses line item 18 for the amount of \$1,938,253. totaling \$2,336,366. The motion passed unanimously 9-0.

TRI-BOARD MEETING 9/17/09

Mr. Stapinski requested that a consensus vote be taken in order to show the Board of Selectmen support for the Town Manager's budget reduction plan of \$496,000. Mr. Stumpf briefed the Committee of cost saving opportunities currently being discussed by the School Committee. It was noted that the following options being discussed would have a limited impact

on students and teachers including SPED Out of District costs, federal stimulus dollars use, technology, substitute teachers, Food Service Department utilities charge, Food Services Director, stipends, health insurance, and evaluation therapy. After lengthy discussion, Committee members chose not to vote for consensus at this time but to wait to hear the School Committee's budget presentation at the Tri-Board Meeting the following night.

Cindy Milne moved and Mark Merritt seconded to recommend disapproval of Article 8 Transfer from Stabilization Fund to School and Town Departments to balance the FY2010 Budget ; and Article 9 Transfer from Free Cash to School and Town Departments to Balance the FY2010 Budget . The motion passed unanimously 9-0.

NEXT MEETING

Finance Committee
Monday, September 21, 2009
2nd Floor Conference Room
7:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT – 9:50 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carolyn Lynch
Recording Secretary

